

Responding to President Bush's latest request for Iraqi aid, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr., today harshly criticized the President for deliberately misleading the American people about the war against terrorism in Iraq.

"Every facet of the war against Iraq -- the start, the so-called end, the reconstruction -- has been based on lies," said Jackson, who referred to President Bush as the Pinocchio President.

"First, the President told the American people we had to invade Iraq because Iraq was linked to the 9-11 attacks and because Saddam was poised to strike the free world with weapons of mass destruction. There is no proof of either.

"Then, the President told the American people that the major combat in Iraq was over on May 1 st. Again, not true. We've lost more soldiers since May 1st than before it. We still don't have Saddam. And Iraq remains in political and economic chaos. The fact is, and Bush now admits it, the war in Iraq is far from over," Jackson said.

"Next, the President said Iraq was wealthy enough to pay for its own reconstruction. However, now the President is asking the American people to pay \$87 billion to secure and rebuild Iraq."

Regarding that request, Jackson said Bush has also misled Americans on the economy.

"This President has squandered a record budget surplus and created a record \$450-billion budget deficit. He continues cutting domestic programs that shortchange our children's education, limit our seniors' health care, and reduce our veterans' benefits. Yet, he pushes for massive tax cuts for millionaires and for an \$87 billion commitment to Iraq.

"That \$87 billion is enough to rebuild our crumbling schools and infrastructure, to bring quality education and health care to millions of needy Americans, or to put 1.7 million unemployed Americans back to work in \$50,000-a-year jobs."

"This President's priorities are completely out of sync with mine, and, I believe, with most Americans," Jackson said.